

Encyclopedia of Musk (Kasturi) in Islam and Modern Science

Introduction:

Musk, known as 'Kasturi' in Urdu and 'Misk' in Arabic, is one of the most precious and beloved natural perfumes in the world. In Islam, it holds a special place because the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ loved musk and recommended its use. It is mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith as a symbol of purity and goodness. Modern science has also confirmed that natural musk has many beneficial properties, both for the body and mind.

Musk in the Qur'an:

Allah mentions musk in the Qur'an while describing the rewards of Paradise. He says, 'The fragrance of Paradise will be like musk.' (Surah Al-Mutaffifin 83:26). This shows that musk is not only a pleasant scent but also a symbol of purity and spiritual reward. It represents beauty, faith, and the blessings of the Hereafter, where everything is pure and perfect.

Musk in the Hadith:

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ loved musk and often used it as perfume. He said, 'The best perfume is musk.' (Sahih Muslim 2252). He encouraged Muslims to use perfume regularly, especially before prayers and gatherings. The Prophet ﷺ also said that good scent is one of the things that brings comfort to his heart. Musk was often used to perfume the Masjid al-Nabawi and the Kaaba, showing its high value and spiritual importance in Islam.

Origin and Source of Musk:

Natural musk originally comes from the musk deer, found mainly in the mountains of Asia. The scent is taken from a small gland of the male deer, dried, and mixed with oils to make perfume. It has a strong, sweet, and long-lasting fragrance. Because of its rarity, natural musk is very expensive. Today, scientists have developed synthetic musk that imitates the natural scent without harming animals, aligning with ethical and Islamic values of compassion.

Spiritual Significance of Musk in Islam:

In Islam, musk symbolizes purity, cleanliness, and faith. It is often mentioned as the scent of the righteous. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'The example of a good companion is like that of the seller of musk; even if you do not buy anything from him, you still enjoy a pleasant fragrance from him.' (Sahih al-Bukhari 5534). This shows that musk represents goodness that benefits others, just like good company influences the heart and soul.

Use of Musk in Islamic Practices:

Musk has been used in various Islamic rituals. It is recommended to use musk after purification (ghusl) or during prayer. In early Islamic times, it was also used to perfume the Kaaba and the coverings of the Prophet's Mosque. Scholars of Tibb-e-Nabawi (Prophetic Medicine) have noted that musk refreshes the heart, sharpens the senses,

and brings joy. It was also used in medicines and ointments for its cooling and calming effects.

Health Benefits of Musk in Modern Science:

Modern science has discovered that natural musk contains compounds that can help reduce stress and anxiety. It acts as a natural relaxant and improves mood. Some studies suggest that musk oil stimulates blood circulation and helps in calming the nervous system. It also has mild antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties, making it useful in aromatherapy and natural medicine. The soothing smell of musk can also improve sleep quality and mental focus.

Musk and Mental Well-being:

Both Islamic teachings and modern science recognize the connection between fragrance and emotional health. The Prophet ﷺ loved pleasant scents because they bring peace to the heart and clarity to the mind. Science now confirms that fragrances like musk can affect brain activity, releasing hormones such as serotonin that reduce stress and increase happiness. This harmony between Islamic teachings and modern research shows the wisdom behind the Prophet's love for musk.

Musk in Modern Perfumery:

Musk remains one of the most popular ingredients in perfumes worldwide. Modern perfumers use natural and synthetic musk in luxury fragrances because of its lasting aroma. It blends well with other natural oils like rose, amber, and sandalwood. In Islamic countries, musk-based perfumes are widely used during religious events and daily life, following the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.

Ethical Use and Alternatives:

Islam teaches compassion toward animals, so harming deer for musk is discouraged. Today, many Muslim scientists and perfumers use plant-based or synthetic alternatives that match the scent of natural musk. These modern versions are ethical, safe, and approved for use. The intention behind using musk — purity, cleanliness, and following the Sunnah — remains the same, even with these alternatives.

Summary:

Musk (Kasturi) is one of the most beloved fragrances in Islam and a symbol of purity, goodness, and faith. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ praised musk as the best perfume, and the Qur'an describes it as the scent of Paradise. Modern science supports its calming and healing properties, confirming the truth of Islamic teachings. Whether natural or synthetic, musk continues to be a part of Muslim life as a reminder of the Sunnah and the beauty of Allah's creation.